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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of:

Gerald H. Ablan

Serial No.: 09/644,411

Filed: August 23, 2000

For: Auction Management System

Art Unit: 3621

Examiner: C. Hewitt II

AMENDMENT DATED DECEMBER 16, 2003

Please amend the claims as shown as shown:

1. (currently amended) ~~A method for managing on-line auctions: A~~  
computer-readable medium storing computer-executable instructions for causing a  
computer-controlled apparatus to perform the steps of:  
creating an auction consolidation account;  
receiving a plurality of auction requests in association with the account, each  
auction request associated with a different type of item to be posted for sale by on a  
respective auction site;  
posting the auction requests to one or more computer implemented auction sites  
visiting each one or more auction sites and, during the visit, posting the  
corresponding auction requests request;  
compiling a consolidated auction monitoring report containing information  
pertaining to each auction request;  
revisiting each auction site to extract updated auction information pertaining to  
the corresponding auction ~~request~~ requests; and  
updating the auction monitoring report with the updated auction information  
~~extracted from the one or more auction sites monitoring sites.~~

2. (currently amended) The ~~method~~ computer-readable medium of claim 1, wherein the step of posting an auction request to an auction site comprise the steps of:  
receiving auction advertisement text;  
receiving an auction advertisement image;  
receiving a selection of one of a plurality of predefined auction templates;  
creating an auction submission by combining the advertisement text and the advertisement images in a format defined by the selected auction template; and  
transmitting the auction submission to the auction site.

3. (currently amended) The ~~method~~ computer-readable medium of claim 1, wherein the step of extracting updated information from an auction site comprises the steps of:  
identifying a page containing the updated information; and  
parsing the page to extract the updated auction information.

4. (currently amended) The ~~method~~ computer-readable medium of claim 3, further comprising the steps of downloading the page before parsing the page to extract the updated auction information.

a 5. (currently amended) The ~~method~~ computer-readable medium of claim 1, wherein the step of revisiting the auction sites occurs upon receiving a user request for the auction monitoring report.

6. (currently amended) The ~~method~~ computer-readable medium of claim 1, further comprising the step of repeating the steps of claim 1 to create a plurality of auction monitoring reports in association with a plurality of accounts.

7. (currently amended) The ~~method~~ computer-readable medium of claim 5, further comprising the steps of:  
periodically identifying posted auctions that have closed; and  
for each closed auction:

visiting the corresponding auction site,  
extracting closed auction data from the auction site, and  
processing the closed auction data.

8. (currently amended) The ~~method~~ computer-readable medium of claim 7 6,  
wherein the step of extracting the closed auction data comprises the steps of:  
identifying a page containing the closed auction data; and  
parsing the page to extract the auction closing data information.

9. (currently amended) The ~~method~~ computer-readable medium of claim 6,  
wherein the step of processing the closed auction data comprises the step of sending a  
notice of the auction closing in a manner specified in a record associated with the  
corresponding account.

10. (currently amended) The ~~method~~ computer-readable medium of claim 6,  
wherein the step of processing the closed auction data comprises the steps of:  
determining whether the auction resulted in a sale, and if the auction resulted in  
a sale;  
notifying a selling party of the sale;  
notifying the buying party of the sale; and  
creating a sales record documenting the closed auction closing.

11. (currently amended) The ~~method~~ computer-readable medium of claim 6,  
wherein the step of processing the closed auction comprises the steps of:  
obtaining an automatic feedback instruction from settings data associated with  
the corresponding account; and  
transmitting auction feedback data to the corresponding site in accordance with  
the automatic feedback instruction.

12. (currently amended) The ~~method~~ computer-readable medium of claim 7 6,  
wherein the step of processing the closed auction comprises the steps of:

displaying auction tracking fields in a corresponding auction monitoring report;  
receiving user input to one or more of the tracking fields; and  
recording the user input to the auction monitoring report.

13. (currently amended) The method computer-readable medium of claim 12, wherein the tracking fields include buyer notification, payment received, auction item shipped, and payment received.

14. (currently amended) The method computer-readable medium of claim 12, further comprising the steps of:  
obtaining an auction processing instruction from settings data associated with the corresponding account;  
performing an operation in accordance with the auction processing instruction;  
and  
setting one of the tracking field to indicate completion of the operation.

15. (currently amended) ~~A computer-readable medium storing computer-executable instructions for performing the steps of claim 1.~~ The computer-readable medium of claim 1, wherein at least two of the auction requests are posted to different auction sites.

16. (currently amended) A computer-controlled apparatus configured to perform the method computer-executable instructions of claim 1.

17. (currently amended) An auction management system implemented by a computer controlled apparatus configured to:  
receive and store an inventory of text descriptions of auction items;  
receive and store an inventory of images of the auction items;  
receive and store an inventory of advertisement templates;

for each of a plurality of auction requests, combine a selected text description and a selected image to create an auction submission for selling an associated item in a format defined by a selected auction template;

visit each one or more auction sites site to post a corresponding auction submission;

compile a consolidated auction monitoring report containing information pertaining to each auction submission;

revisit each auction site to extract updated auction information pertaining to the corresponding auction request; and

~~updating~~ update the auction monitoring report with the updated auction information extracted from the auction ~~monitoring~~ sites.

18. (original) The auction management system of claim 17, further configured to: periodically identify posted auctions that have closed; and for each closed auction:

visit the corresponding auction site,

extract auction closing data from the auction site, and

process the closed auction.

19. (original) The auction management system of claim 17, further configured to: determine whether the auction resulted in a sale, and if the auction resulted in a sale:

notify a selling party of the sale;

notify the buying party of the sale; and

create a sales record documenting the auction closing data.

20. (original) The auction management system of claim 17, further configured to: obtain an automatic feedback instruction from settings data associated with the corresponding account; and

transmit auction feedback data to the corresponding site in accordance with the automatic feedback instruction.

21. (original) The auction management system of claim 17, further configured to:  
display auction tracking fields in a corresponding auction monitoring report;  
receive user input to one or more of the tracking fields; and  
record the user input to the auction monitoring report.

22. (currently amended) A computer-readable medium storing computer-executable instructions for performing the steps of:

- creating an auction consolidation account;
- receiving a plurality of auction requests in association with the account, each to be posted on a respective one or more auction sites site;
- visiting each auction site and, during the visit, posting the corresponding auction request by:
  - receiving auction advertisement text,
  - receiving auction advertisement images,
  - receiving a selection of one of a plurality of predefined auction templates,
  - creating an auction submission for selling an associated item by
- combining the advertisement text and the advertisement images in a format defined by the selected auction template, and
- transmitting the auction submission to the auction site;
- compiling a consolidated auction monitoring report containing information pertaining to each auction request;
- revisiting each auction site and, during the subsequent visit, extracting updated auction information pertaining to the corresponding auction request by:
  - identifying a page containing the updated information, and
  - parsing the page to extract the updated auction information;
- updating the auction monitoring report with the updated auction information extracted from the auction monitoring sites;
- upon identification of the account, providing access to the monitoring report;
- periodically identifying posted auctions that have closed; and
- for each closed auction:
  - visiting the corresponding auction site,
  - extracting auction closing data from the auction site, and
  - processing the closed auction by determining whether the auction resulted in a sale, and if the auction resulted in a sale, notifying a selling party of the sale, notifying the buying party of the sale, and creating a sales record documenting the auction closing data.

23. (original) The computer-readable medium of claim 22, wherein the instructions further comprise the steps of repeating the steps of claim 1 to create a plurality of auction monitoring reports in association with a plurality of accounts.

24.(currently amended) The ~~method~~ computer-readable medium of claim 23, wherein the instructions further comprise the step of processing the closed auction comprises the steps of:

obtaining an automatic feedback instruction from settings data associated with the corresponding account; and

transmitting auction feedback data to the corresponding site in accordance with the automatic feedback instruction.

25.(currently amended) The ~~method~~ computer-readable medium of claim 24, wherein the instructions further comprise the step of processing the closed auction comprises the steps of:

displaying auction tracking fields in a corresponding auction monitoring report;

receiving user input to one or more of the tracking fields;

recording the user input to the auction monitoring report.

26.(currently amended) The ~~method~~ computer-readable medium of claim 25, wherein the instructions further comprise the steps of:

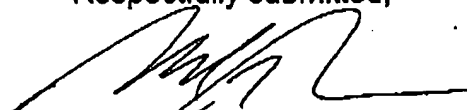
obtaining an auction processing instruction from settings data associated with the corresponding account;

performing an operation in accordance with the auction processing instruction;

and

setting one of the tracking field to indicate completion of the operation.

Respectfully submitted,



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